The Argument.

LVcius Tarquinius (*for his excessiue pride surnamed* Superbus) *after he had caused his owne father in lawe* Seruius Tullius *to be cruelly murdered, and contrary to the Roman lawes and customes, not requiring or staying for the peoples suffrages, had possessed himselfe of the kingdome: went accompanied with his sonnes and other noble men of* Rome *to besiege* Ardea: *during which, the principall men of the Army meeting one euening at the Tent of* Sextus Tarquinius, *the kings son, in their discourses after supper, euery one commended the vertues of his own wife: among whom* Colatinus *extolled the incomparable chastity of his wife* Lucretia. *In that pleasant humor they al posted to* Rome, *and intending by their secret and sudden arriuall, to make triall of that which euery one had before auouched, onely* Colatinus *finds his wife (though it were late in the night) spinning amongst her maids, the other Ladies were all found dancing and reuelling, or in seuerall disports. Whereupon the Noble men yeelded* Colatinus *the victo-*

tus Tarquinius *being enflamed with* Lucreces *beauty; yet smothering his passion for the present, departed with the rest backe to the Campe, from whence he shortly after priuily with-drew himselfe, and was (according to his state) royally entertained and lodged by* Lucrece *at* Colatium. *The same night, hee trecherously stealeth into her Chamber, violently rauisht her, and early in the morning speedeth away.* Lucrece *in this lamentable plight, hastily dispatcheth messengers, one to* Rome *for her father, another to the Camp for* Colatine. *They came, the one accompanied with* Iunius Brutus, *the other with* Publius Valerius: *and finding* Lucrece *attired in mourning habit, demanded the cause of her sorrow. She first taking an oath of them for her reuenge, reuealed the acter, and whole manner of his dealing, and withall suddenly stabbed her selfe. Which done, with consent, they all vowed to root out the whole hated family of the* Tarquins: *and bearing the dead body to* Rome, Brutus *acquainted the people with the doer and manner of the vile deed, with a bitter inuectiue against the tyranny of the King, wherewith the people were so moued with one consent, and a generall acclamation, that the* Tarquins *were all exiled, & the state gouernment changed from Kings to Consuls.*

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